

Agricultural Marketing Service  
Office of the Deputy Administrator for Marketing Programs  
Fruit and Vegetable Division  
Market News Branch  
Market News Field Office  
GS-303-05  
Market Reporting Clerk (Office Automation)

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## I. INTRODUCTION

This position is located in a terminal market field office in the Market News Branch of the Fruit and Vegetable Division. The Branch is responsible for reporting market news information on fresh fruits and vegetables or other products shipped into and traded on the local wholesale market.

The incumbent serves as a Market Reporting Clerk responsible primarily for walking the market and collecting, compiling, and preparing reports on the volume of fruits and vegetables received by wholesalers and others on the market and in the metropolitan area. The incumbent prepares other reports based on information gathered by market news reporters, and performs a variety of administrative duties involved in the operation of the office.

## I. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Through personal interview of wholesalers, brokers, buyers, chain store warehouses, military installations, and other receivers, collects data concerning the volume of fresh fruits and vegetables arriving by trailer truck, rail, boat, and air in the metropolitan area including suburban locations served by the local field office. Verifies, compiles, and converts data into standardized units of measure according to Branch instructions and tabulates data under considerable pressure of deadlines for inclusion in daily market news reports released by the office and for transmission to shipping point field offices and to Headquarters via a computer data base system. Because the information requested by the employee is frequently relayed in a manner convenient to the information source, primary information gathering may require the employee to conduct additional investigative methods such as searching coolers, checking with buyers, or contacting truck drivers/trucking companies to obtain accurate market data. Classifies the data according to commodity, state, and country of origin, and other factors, and prepares required reports.

Utilizing a computer data base system, prepares in final form, in approved format, the truck unload data for reproduction and electronic transmission. Prepares a variety of other reports, as required, in approved format for electronic transmission to Headquarters and other field offices, and for duplication and mailing to market report subscribers. Uses the microcomputer for

preparation of reports, entering and retrieving data, and posting and tabulating price data for a variety of report summaries. Operates the computer data base system for transmission and receipt of messages and market wires used daily by industry and field offices at other locations.

Reviews Transportation Reports Section computer printouts summarizing market receipts and verifies data, including volume and place of origin of the commodities passing through the terminal market, and informs the Transportation Reports Section of discrepancies/errors.

Prepares and maintains all administrative records and reports such as time and attendance reports and travel vouchers; orders supplies; takes inventories and mail and telephone surveys; arranges for repair of equipment; collects fees from market report subscribers, maintains appropriate records, and transmits funds to NFC; and performs other related duties.

Assists the Officer-In-Charge (OIC) in all phases of office management and in providing service to the public by receiving and responding to all visitors and telephone calls except in cases where it is necessary to defer to the OIC or other reporter for technical information. Prepares all correspondence from handwritten notes, oral instructions, or other methods, and operates reproduction and mailing equipment.

Adheres to Equal Employment and Civil Rights policies, goals and objectives in performing the duties of this position. Assures that oral and written communications are bias-free and that differences of other employees and clients are respected and valued.

### III. FACTORS

#### 1. Knowledge Required by the Position

Knowledge of production areas, commodities produced, and marketing seasons for each.

Knowledge of capacity for a multitude of containers used to transport or market over a hundred different commodities.

Knowledge of standard units of measure and conversion factors as assigned by the Transportation Reports Section. Skill in converting contents of numerous containers into the units most commonly used for commodity.

Knowledge and skill in meeting and dealing with members of the trade and others to encourage voluntary cooperation from all receivers upon whom the incumbent must depend for accurate and complete market data.

Knowledge and location of individual wholesalers, brokers, chain store warehouses, commission merchants, military establishments, and other institutions receiving supplies direct from shipping

point to assure the reports represent receipts for the entire metropolitan area, and ability to recognize and delete data when they represent purchases from local wholesalers in order to eliminate duplication.

Skill in operating a microcomputer for report preparation, production of report mailing labels, data compilation, and word processing purposes, and to select proper programs for each activity. Also, skill in operating an electric typewriter and report reproduction, mailing and related office equipment. A qualified typist is required.

Knowledge of regulations and procedures to assure travel vouchers are properly prepared, time and attendance reports submitted, and other administrative reports and records are maintained and submitted according to instructions.

Knowledge of procedures to handle collection and transmittal of Federal funds.

Knowledge of grammar, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and technical terminology as needed to prepare and type a variety of correspondence and other material.

Knowledge of local industry needs for information to intelligently discuss the trends, market conditions, and supply of fruits and vegetables with local industry members.

## 2. Supervisory Controls

The employee is under the supervision of the Officer-In-Charge (OIC). The employee works independently in carrying out assignments on a day-to-day basis. The supervisor provides assistance only in new or unusual situations, which rarely occur. Completed work is spot-checked for compliance with procedures, completeness, effectiveness in meeting objectives, and absence of typographical errors.

## 3. Guidelines

Guidelines are largely for reference purposes only and are general in nature. The incumbent must exercise considerable judgment in interpreting and applying the Market News Handbook; Department, Agency, and Division instructions; and technical dictionaries. Dealing with situations with an absence of guides in the usual practice. For situations covered by guidelines, the employee uses judgment in locating, selecting, and applying the most appropriate guide covering the situation. The supervisor provides assistance for situations involving deviations from established guides or in the absence of applicable guides.

#### 4. Complexity

The incumbent deals daily with 65 to 100 different fruit and vegetable commodities arriving from all active commercial producing areas. Each commodity is packed in individual containers. Numerous information sources must be interviewed carefully and manifests or other records of each commercial firm reviewed in detail to assure that reports of unloads reflect the same commodities and state or country of origin for which the reporter is issuing market conditions and price information. The various container weights must be positively identified for each commodity to facilitate calculations and consolidation of data to show the volume of truck receipts by commodity converted to standardized units of measure. The employee must ensure that the data transmitted via the computer data base system is done so in the proper format, enabling retrieval by the various field offices and Headquarters' computerized equipment. Reproduction and mailing room activities must be coordinated to speed printing and sorting to meet postal requirements.

#### 5. Scope and Effect

The primary purpose of this position is to report truck receipts arriving in the local metropolitan area for benefit of growers and marketing firms throughout the country in evaluating supply in relation to demand for each product so that market decisions can be made concerning prices and distribution for each commodity nationwide. Further, it allows shippers and other marketing firms to select from knowledge of supplies available in alternative destination markets. The report, which becomes part of the 22 city arrivals released by the Branch Headquarters Office, facilitates planning as well as marketing and distribution of the nation's fresh fruit and vegetable production. Also, the administrative and clerical duties of the position are essential to maintaining an efficient field office operation.

#### 6. Personal Contacts

Contacts are established and maintained with wholesalers; accountants and other personnel of firms receiving and distributing fresh fruit and vegetables at the terminal market; chain store personnel and other metropolitan area distributors; railroad freight company personnel; employees of the Branch, Division, and other government agencies; and the general public.

#### 7. Purpose of Contacts

Contacts are primarily for the purpose of obtaining, compiling, and releasing information relative to the volume and origin of fresh fruits and vegetables handled at the terminal market, receiving instructions, taking and relaying messages, directing callers and visitors to the appropriate officials, and otherwise being responsive to the need of the public who request various types of agricultural information.

#### 8. Physical Demands

The work may require unusually early morning duty hours consisting of continuous walking, standing, and climbing stairs for two or three hours each day, and lifting of light items including paper and other office supplies. While covering the market, the employee is subjected to moving forklifts, hand trucks, and other means of transport of fruits and vegetables.

#### 9. Work Environment

The work is performed at a terminal wholesale fruit and vegetable market, which may subject the employee to undesirable working conditions such as distasteful language and uncooperative market employees. The nature of the environment of some terminal markets creates the potential for physical danger to the employee. After market coverage, the work is performed in an office setting.